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E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, MILI, NATO, UR, XF, XG
SUBJECT: REPORT ON THE SITUATION IN THE MEDITERREANEAN (MED REPORT)

REF: A) USNATO 1768; B) STATE 090571

1. ON APRIL 25 AD HOC GROUP ON THE MEDITERRANEAN COMPLETED DRAFTING OF SPRING 1975 MED REPORT AND SECRETARY GENERAL LUNS HAS NOW CIRCULATED FINAL PRODUCT AS DOCUMENT C-M(75)27 (SEE TEXT BELOW). WORK OF DRAFTING GROUP WENT SMOOTHLY AND SESSIONS WERE LESS CONTENTIOUS THAN IN 1973 AND 1974. THIS WAS DUE IN PART TO SUPERIOR IS INITIAL DRAFT (REF A) WHICH FOCUSED ATTENTION OF STUDY ON EXAMINATION OF SOVIET PENETRATION OF MEDITERRANEAN. REPORT CONTAINS NO FOOTNOTES OR BRACKETS. MED REPORT WILL APPEAR ON FORTHCOMING NAC AGENDA, PROBABLY ON MAY 14. IF DEPARTMENT CONCURS, MISSION PLANS TO OFFER NO OBJECTION TO COUNCIL APPROVAL.

2. BEGIN TEXT

C-(75)27

DEVELOPMENTS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN
DECEMBER 1974 TO APRIL 1975
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1. AT THEIR LAST MEETING IN BRUSSELS, ON 12TH AND 13TH DECEMBER, 1974, MINISTERS NOTED A REPORT ON THE SITUATION IN THE MEDITERRANEAN (C-M(74)79(REVISED) WHICH HAD BEEN PREPARED, ON THEIR INSTRUCTIONS, BY THE COUNCIL IN PERMANENT

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SESSION. IN PARAGRAPH 8 OF THE MINISTERIAL COMMUNIQUE, MINISTERS INVITED THE COUNCIL IN PERMANENT SESSION TO KEEP THE SITUATION UNDER REVIEW AND TO REPORT TO THEM AGAIN AT THEIR NEXT MEETING.

2. IN ACCORDANCE WITH THESE INSTRUCTIONS, THE COUNCIL IN PERMANENT SESSION ARRANGED FOR THE PREPARATION OF THE FOLLOWING REPORT WHICH SHOULD BE REGARDED AS PART OF THE CONTINUING REVIEW OF AND CONSULTATION ON THE SITUATION IN THE MEDITERRANEAN. IN VIEW OF THE FLUIDITY OF THE SITUATION, HOWEVER, THE SURVEY HAS FOCUSED ON THE OUTSTANDING EVENTS AND ON THE GENERAL TREND OF DEVELOPMENTS AS IT AFFECTS THE ALLIANCE.

I. SIGNIFICANT EVENTS IN THE POLITICAL, MILITARY AND ECONOMIC SPHERES

A. POLITICAL

3. THE SUSPENSION, ANNOUNCED ON 22ND MARCH, OF THE CURRENT PHASE OF DR. KISSINGER'S EFFORTS TO ARRIVE AT A SECOND EGYPTIAN-ISRAELI DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT HAS LED TO A NEW SITUATION, THE IMPLICATIONS OF WHICH CANNOT YET BE ASSESSED.

EGYPT

4. THE POSTPONEMENT ANNOUNCED ON 30TH DECEMBER - AND WITHOUT ANY CONVINCING OFFICIAL EXPLANATION- OF THE VISIT MR. BREZHNEV WAS TO MAKE TO EGYPT IN JANUARY SHOWED THAT RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES WERE NOT AS GOOD AS THEY MIGHT BE. THE POSTPONEMENT WAS INTERPRETED IN EGYPT AS A CONSIDERABLE SNUB FOR MR. SADAT WHO WAS BANKING ON THE VISIT FOR PRESTIGE REASONS AND WITH AN EYE TO HIS POSITION IN THE ARAB WORLD. EGYPTIAN DISAPPOINTMENT WAS ILLUSTRATED BY THE FACT THAT IN A NUMBER OF INTERVIEWS GIVEN AFTER THESE EVENTS, PRESIDENT SADAT DID NOT MINCE HIS WORDS. HE REPROACHED THE RUSSIANS FOR NOT HAVING MADE GOOD THE EGYPTIAN LOSSES OF ARMAMENTS AND MILITARY EQUIPMENT SUSTAINED DURING THE OCTOBER

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WAR AND FOR REFUSING TO SUPPLY SPARE PARTS FOR EQUIPMENT ALREADY DELIVERED, TO GRANT A TEN-YEAR MORATORIUM ON THE EGYPTIAN DEBT (UNOFFICIALLY ESTIMATED AT $4,000 MILLION) OR TO STEP UP DEVELOPMENT AND RECONSTRUCTION AID.

5. THE SOVIET FOREIGN MINISTER, MR. GROYMYKO, VISITED CAIRO AT HIS OWN REQUEST, FROM 3RD TO 5TH FEBRUARY AFTER CALLING AT DAMASCUS. DESPITE HIS VISIT, THE MAIN CAUSES OF DISCORD CLEARLY REMAINED UNRESOLVED. A SHORT TIME LATER, HOWEVER, THERE WAS A RESUMPTION IN THE SUPPLY OF CERTAIN ARMAMENTS, BUT ONLY ON A VERY SMALL AND UNSATISFACTORY SCALE. ANOTHER POINT TO BE NOTED IN THIS CONNECTION IS THAT MR. GROMYKO'S VISIT, WHICH WAS FITTED IN BETWEEN DR. KISSINGER'S TWO VISITS TO CAIRO, PROBABLY AIMED ALSO AT SHOWING THE CONTINUED SOVIET INTEREST

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IN THE MIDDLE EAST. THE EGYPTIAN FOREIGN MINISTER VISITED
MOSCOW ON 19TH APRIL.

SYRIA

6. WITH ITS SUPPLY OF ARMS AND CREDITS AND THE MORATORIUM
IT HAS GRANTED ON THE SYRIAN DEBT, THE USSR HAS FURTHER
INGRATIATED ITSELF WITH DAMASCUS. PRESIDENT ASSAD, WHO
UNDOUBTEDLY ATTACHES GREAT IMPORTANCE TO SOVIET DIPLOMATIC
SUPPORT AND MILITARY AID, NONETHELESS DOES NOT WISH TO FALL
ENTIRELY UNDER MOSCOW'S THUMB. PARTLY IN AN ATTEMPT TO STOP
A BILATERAL AGREEMENT BETWEEN EGYPT AND ISRAEL, PRESIDENT ASSAD
HAS TURNED TO THE PLO WITH WHOM HE HAS RECENTLY SET UP A JOINT
MILITARY COMMAND. THE PLO DOES NOT APPEAR TO HARBOUR MANY

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ILLUSIONS IN THIS RESPECT. IN HIS SEARCH FOR BALANCE,
PRESIDENT ASSAD HAS ALSO MADE APPROACHES TO THE OPPOSITE SIDE
OF THE MIDDLE EAST POLITICAL SPECTRUM, NAMELY TO RIAD
(KING FAISAL VISITED DAMASCUS AND SYRIA HAS RECENTLY BEEN
GRANTED A SAUDI CREDIT OF $219 MILLION), THE GOLF OIL EMIRATES
AND JORDAN. IN A MEETING BETWEEN PRESIDENTS ASSAD AND SADAT
HELD IN LATE APRIL UNDER THE AEGIS OF KING KHALED, SOME
MOVEMENT APPEARED TO HAVE BEEN MADE TOWARDS A CO-ORDINATION OF
VIEWS.

LIBYA

7. ALTHOUGH THERE HAS BEEN A SOFT PEDALLING OF ANTI-SOVIET
PROPAGANDA IN THE LIBYAN PRESS, AN AGREEMENT FOR CULTURAL AND
ECONOMIC EXCHANGES WITH RUSSIA AND AN INCREASE IN THE PROVISION
OF RUSSIAN ARMS AND SUPPORTING TECHNICIANS, IT SEEMS UNLIKELY
THAT THERE WILL BE ANY SIGNIFICANT RAPPROCHEMENT BETWEEN THE

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TWO COUNTRIES. HOWEVER, MR. BREZHNEV'S VISIT TO LIBYA IN THE SPRING, IF CONFIRMED, WOULD GIVE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES THE POLITICAL CHARACTER THEY HAVE LACKED SO FAR. THE RUSSIANS WILL OF COURSE HOPE TO ACHIEVE GREATER INFLUENCE OVER LIBYAN POLICIES THROUGH THEIR POSITION AS A MAJOR ARMS SUPPLIER. BUT THE LIBYANS WILL REMAIN EXTREMELY WARY OF SOVIET INTENTIONS.

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8. RELATIONS BETWEEN LIBYA AND EGYPT HAVE FURTHER DETERIORATED DURING THE PERIOD UNDER REVIEW.

PALESTINIANS

9. THE USSR HAS INCREASED ITS SUPPORT OF THE PALESTINIAN LIBERATION ORGANIZATION (PLO), WITHOUT, HOWEVER, GRANTING IT DIPLOMATIC RECOGNITION UP TO NOW. ONLY A FEW MONTHS AFTER HIS VISIT TO MOSCOW IN AUGUST, YASSER ARAFAT, AT THE HEAD OF A PALESTINIAN DELEGATION, WAS BACK AGAIN, BETWEEN 25TH AND 30TH NOVEMBER 1974, FOR TALKS WITH MR. KOSYGIN. MR. GROMYKO ALSO SAW MR. ARAFAT IN DAMASCUS DURING HIS MIDDLE EAST TOUR IN FEBRUARY, WHERE HE CALLED FOR THE FORMATION OF A PALESTINIAN "STATE", A THEME WHICH NOW APPEARS TO BE A SOVIET LINE. THE SOVIETS ALSO NOW REFER TO THE PLO AS THE "SOLE LEGITIMATE REPRESENTATIVE" OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE. MR. ARAFAT IS DUE TO VISIT MOSCOW AGAIN SHORTLY.

10. THE RIFTS IN THE PALESTINIAN MOVEMENT HAVE STILL NOT HEALED. THE LEADERSHIP REMAINS INTENSELY SUSPICIOUS THAT EGYPT INTENDS TO MAKE A SEPARATE PEACE.

IRAQ

11. IRAQ AND IRAN HAVE, UNDER THE AUSPICES OF PRESIDENT BOUMEDIENNE, SETTLED THEIR FRONTIER DISPUTE ON SHATT-AL-ARAB AS WELL AS THEIR OTHER DIFFERENCES. THIS RECONCILIATION BETWEEN TWO COUNTRIES WHOSE MUTUAL HOSTILITY SEEMED INSUPERABLE, CAUSED SURPRISE BY ITS SUDDENNESS. IT COULD LEAD TO A GREATER ROLE FOR IRAQ IN ARAB AFFAIRS. THE AGREEMENT MIGHT HELP TO REDUCE SOVIET INFLUENCE IN IRAQ AND IN THE GOLF AREA. IN FACT, ONE OF THE IRANIAN MOTIVATIONS FOR THE AGREEMENT MIGHT BE TO REDUCE SOVIET INFLUENCE IN THE AREA. THE SOVIETS APPEAR TO BE CONCERNED THAT THE SETTLEMENT OF THE DISPUTE COULD LEAD TO A LESSENING OF BAGHDAD'S MILITARY DEPENDENCE ON MOSCOW.

B. MILITARY

SOVIET MILITARY PRESENCE IN THE AREA(1)

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12. THE SOVIET-MEDITERRANEAN SQUADRON (SOVMEDRON) STILL CONTINUES TO BE THE MAIN SOVIET PRESENCE IN THE AREA; SINCE 1971 THE TOTAL SOVIET SHIP DAYS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN HAS REMAINED FAIRLY STABLE, BUT THE COMPOSITION OF THE SQUADRON HAS CHANGED SIGNIFICANTLY.

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(1) SEE ANNEXES A AND B

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13. THE NUMBER OF SUBMARINES AND AUXILIARIES HAS INCREASED, WHILE THAT OF THE SURFACE COMBATANTS HAS DECLINED. FIFTEEN SUMARINES ARE NOW NORMALLY DEPLOYED (COMPARED TO 11 IN 1971). THIS INCREASED SUBMARINE DEPLOYMENT HAS BEEN POSSIBLE BY DOUBLING THE LENGTH OF PATROLS BY DIESEL UNITS, BUT THESE LONGER STATION TIMES REQUIRE MID-DEPLOYMENT MAINTENANCE AT EGYPTIAN AND SYRIAN PORTS. THEREFORE, ALL SUBMARINES ARE PROBABLY NOT OPERATIONAL AT ANY ONE TIME. THE SQUADRON'S AUXILIARIES HAVE ALSO BEEN INCREASING, WHILE SOVIET INTELLIGENCE-COLLECTION DEPLOYMENT HAS DECLINED AS IT HAS WORLD-WIDE SINCE THE SOVIETS NOW USE COMBATANTS FOR CERTAIN COLLECTION FUNCTIONS. THE AVERAGE NUMBER OF SURFACE COMBATANTS, INCLUDING MINESWEEPERS, IS NOW AT LEAST 15 SHIPS. TWO POLNOCNY CLASS MEDIUM LANDING SHIPS ARE MAINTAINED PERMANENTLY IN THE MEDITERRANEAN.

14. PARTICIPATION OF THE SOVMEDRON IN THE WORLD-WIDE SOVIET NAVAL EXERCISE OKEAN 75 HAS BEEN LOW-KKEY AND CONDUCTED WELL-REMOVED FROM THE SENSITIVE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN AREAS.

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CLEARANCE OF THE SUEZ CANAL

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15. ON 29TH MARCH, PRESIDENT SADAT ANNOUNCED THAT THE SUEZ CANAL WOULD BE REOPENED ON 5TH JUNE NEXT. IT WILL BE NAVIGABLE IN ITS 1967 DIMENSIONS (38 FT DRAUGHT). IT IS UNLIKELY, HOWEVER, THAT THE CANAL CAN BE RESTORED TO FULL COMMERCIAL OPERATION BEFORE LATE 1975 OR EARLY 1976. THERE ARE PLANS FOR INCREASING ITS DEPTH(1).

ARMS SUPPLIES TO ARAB COUNTRIES

16. THE SOVIETS HAVE RESUMED ARMS DELIVERIES TO EGYPT. THE SUPPLY HOWEVER HAS BEEN LIMITED TO SMALL SHIPMENTS OF SPARE PARTS, AMMUNITION AND MORE RECENTLY AIRCRAFT OF VARIOUS TYPES IN FULFILMENT OF CONTRACTS OR AGREEMENTS SIGNED BEFORE THE OCTOBER WAR. THE TOTAL AMOUNT OF THESE AIRCRAFT DELIVERIES IS ESTIMATED AT ABOUT 30.

17. EVEN FOLLOWING THE VISIT OF MARSHAL KULIKOV, FIRST DEPUTY MINISTER OF DEFENCE, TO BAGHDAD IN DECEMBER, IRAQ HAS CONTINUED TO SEEK SOVIET ASSURANCE OF THE CONTINUITY IN THE FLOW OF AMMUNITION AND SPARES. AGREEMENT WAS PROBABLY REACHED ON THE CONTINUATION OF IRAQI PILOT TRAINING (IRAQI AIR FORCE HAS

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TWO MIG-23 (FLOGGER) SQUADRONS TOTALLING 32 AIRCRAFT, 24 OF WHICH ARE OPERATIONAL), THE SUPPLY OF ABOUT 100 TANKS (INCLUDING T-62S) AND A NUMBER OF VEHICLES, AND THE EXPANSION OF CO-OPERATION ALSO IN THE NAVAL FIELD.

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(1) THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE REOPENING OF THE SUEZ CANAL WERE THOROUGHLY EXAMINED IN THE REPORT C-M(75)12(REVISED)

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18. ABOUT 100 TO 300 MILITARY INSTRUCTORS MOSTLY FROM THE SOVIET UNION BUT ALSO OTHER WARSAW PACT COUNTRIES ARE IN LIBYA. LIBYAN MILITARY PERSONNEL HAVE PROBABLY BEEN SENT TO THE USSR FOR TRAINING UNDER AN ARRANGEMENT CONNECTED WITH THE SALE OF SURFACE-TO-AIR MISSILE EQUIPMENT. THE TANK SUPPLIES OF THE TYPES T-55 AND T-62 HAVE REPORTEDLY BEEN INCREASED. IN ADDITION THE SOVIET UNION WOULD HAVE PROMISED THE PROVISION OF A NUMBER OF TUPOLEV 22 (BLINDER), MIG-21 (FISH BED) AND PERHAPS MIG-23 (FLOGGER).

19. IN ADDITION, ACCORDING TO ONE REPORT A SOVIET NAVAL MISSION HAS SIGNED AN AGREEMENT WITH LIBYA FOR THE CONSTRUCTION IN THAT COUNTRY OF A SHORT-WAVE RADIO STATION TO CONTROL SOVIET VESSELS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN. THIS FACILITY WOULD BE BUILT AT CAPE RAS EL ITAL IN CYRENAICA, WHERE A FORMER GERMAN SUBMARINE BASE RECENTLY REHABILITATED BY THE LIBYANS IS LOCATED.

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20. SOVIET SUPPLY OF ARMS TO SYRIA CONTINUED. THERE ARE ABOUT 2,500 TO 3,000 MILITARY ADVISERS MOSTLY FROM THE SOVIET UNION BUT ALSO OTHER WARSAW PACT COUNTRIES IN SYRIA, SOME OF THEM OPERATING SURFACE-TO-AIR MISSILES IN THE AREA OF DAMASCUS, AND ALSO VARIOUS ELECTRONIC SYSTEMS.

USE OF YUGOSLAV NAVAL FACILITIES

21. IN DECEMBER 1974 FOR THE FIRST TIME A SOVIET DIESEL ATTACK SUBMARINE AND A TENDER IN DIRECT TRANSIT FROM SOVIET NORTHERN FLEET WATERS ENTERED THE TIVAT NAVAL SHIPYARD IN THE BOKA KOTORSKA PORT COMPLEX FOR OVERHAUL. THESE TWO NAVAL UNITS MAY BE THERE TO TEST YUGOSLAV CAPABILITIES AND POSSIBLY
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TO DETERMINE HOW TIGHTLY THE YUGOSLAVS WILL CONTROL THE REPAIR OPERATIONS. THEY HAVE SUBSTANTIALLY COMPLIED WITH THE NUMEROUS RESTRICTIONS IMPOSED BY THE NEW YUGOSLAV LAWS (MAXIMUM OF TWO WARSHIPS SIMULTANEOUSLY, 4,000 TON LIMITATION ON COMBATANTS AND 10,000 TONS FOR AUXILIARIRS, MAXIMUM OF SIX MONTHS' STAY, PRESENCE ON BOARD OF ONLY ONE-THIRD OF A SHIP'S CREW, WORK TO BE DONE EXCLUSIVELY BY YUGOSLAVE SHIPYARD PERSONNEL USING MOSTLY YUGUSLAVE MATERIAL, AMMUNITION MUST BE REMOVED).

22. SHOULD THE WORK ON THE TWO UNITS AT TIVAT BE SATISFACTORY, THE SOVIETS WILL ALMOST CERTAINLY TRY TO USE THE BOKA KOTORSKA PORT COMPLEX MORE FREQUENTLY. TIVAT IS YUGOSLAVIA'S LARGEST NAVAL REPAR FACILITY. IT OUTFITS, ALTERS AND REPAIRS SHIPS UP TO DESTROYER SIZE. IN ADDITION TO WELL-EQUIPPED SHOPS, THE YARD HAS TWO FLOATING DRY-DOCKS WITH LIFTING CAPACITIES OF 7,000 AND MORE TONS AND COULD REPAIR MOST OF THE SOVIET MEDITERRANEAN SQUADRON. HEAVIER AUXILIARY UNITS COULD BE HANDLED AT THE NEARBY BIJELA SHIPYARD.

C. ECONOMIC

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23. FOREIGN TRADE STATISTICS FOR THE COUNTRIES ON THE SOUTHERN SIDE OF THE MEDITERRANEAN ARE UNRELIABLE AND DATE BACK TO 1973. THEY NONETHELESS POINT TO A TENDENCY, ALSO NOTED IN 1974, TOWARDS STAGNATION, AND EVEN A DOWNTURN, IN THE SHARE OF THIS TRADE HELD BY THE COMMUNIST COUNTRIES, AND PARTICULARLY THE SOVIET UNION. THE MAGHREB COUNTRIES, LIBYA, EGYPT, SYRIA AND IRAQ TOGETHER ACCOUNT FOR ONLY 4 PCT OF OVERALL SOVIET TRADE. ON THE OTHER HAND, THE USSR AND EASTERN EUROPE HAVE HAD A LARGE SHARE OF TOTAL IRAQI (ABOUT 20 PCT OF THE COUNTRY'S IMPORTS), SYRIAN AND EGYPTIAN TRADE.

24. RECENT SOVIET-EGYPTIAN NEGOTIATIONS ON ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION HAVE THUS FAR FAILED TO SATISFY EGYPTIAN DESIRES. THE ECONOMIC AGREEMENT FOR THE FIVE-YEAR PERIOD 1976-1980, WHICH IS INTENDED TO ESTABLISH CLOSER RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES, HAS YET TO BE SIGNED. THE SOVIETS HAVE REFUSED TO GRANT A TEN-YEAR MORATORIUM ON THE EGYPTIAN DEBT (UNOFFICIALLY ESTIMATED AT $4,000 MILLION) AND HAVE RESISTED EGYPTIAN REQUESTS FOR MORE DEVELOPMENT AND RECONSTRUCTION AID, INCLUDING SOVIET PARTICIPATION IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF PROJECTS RELATING, FOR EXAMPLE, TO THE ALUMINIUM INDUSTRY, SHIPBUIILDING, MINING (IRON AND PHOSPHATES IN PARTICULARLY)POWER AND THE BUILDING OF CEMENT PLANTS. DESPITE THESE PROBLEMS, THE SOVIETS ARE CONTINUING TO CONTRIBUTE TO SUBSTANTIAL ONGOING DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS
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(FOR EXAMPLE, THE ENLARGEMENT OF THE HELWAN IRON AND STEEL COMPLEX AND THE NAG-HAMADI ALUMINIUM PLANT). MEANWHILE, THE EGYPTIANS ARE ALSO CONTINUING EFFORTS TO STRENGTHEN THEIR ECONOMIC TIES WITH THE NON-COMMUNIST INDUSTRIAL COUNTRIES.

25. IN RELATIVE VALUE TERMS, SYRIA AT PRESENT SEEMS TO BE MORE INVOLVED THAN ANY OTHER COUNTRY IN THE REGION IN ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION WITH THE COMMUNIST COUNTRIES. THE USSR REMAINS ITS PRINCIPAL PARTNER IN MANY AREAS OF ECONOMIC AND TECHNICAL AID. ACCOUNT SHOULD ALSO BE TAKEN, HOWEVER, OF THE PART PLAYED BY THE OTHER WARSAW PACT COUNTRIES, PARTICULARLY CZECHOSLOVAKIA AND RUMANIA.

26. THE GROWING INTEREST SHOWN BY THE EASTERN COUNTRIES IN MIDDLE EAST OIL SHOULD LEAD TO AN INCREASE IN IRAQI EXPORTS. IN ADDITION, THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE ADRIA PIPELINE, THE YUGOSLAV BRANCH OF WHICH WILL, MOREOVER, BE PART-FINANCED BY ARAB FUNDS FROM LIBYA AND KUWAIT PRESUPPOSES THAT THERE WILL BE A SIGNIFICANT INCREASE IN SUPPLIES OF IRAQI OIL TO CZECHOSLOVAKIA AND HUNGARY THROUGH THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN

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TERMINAL AND ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION SIGNED IN NOVEMBER 1974, THE SOVIET UNION IS CONTINUING TO PROVIDE AID FOR THE HARNESSING OF THE NORTH RUMAILAH OILFIELD.

II. PRESENT TRENDS

A. POLITICAL

27. THE KREMLIN HARBOURED RESENTMENT AGAINST EGYPT NOT ONLY BECAUSE IT HAD BEEN KEPT OUT OF THE DIPLOMATIC MOVES MADE UNDER THE AEGIS OF THE UNITED STATES SECRETARY OF STATE AND BEACUSE EGYPT HAD NOT ACTIVELY SUPPORTED THE EARLY RECONVENING OF THE GENEVA CONFERENCE, BUT ALSO BECAUSE OF WHAT MOSCOW HAS VIEWED AS AN EFFORT BY SADAT TO BALANCE THE SOVIET INFLUENCE IN THE REGION. BECAUSE OF THE SUSPENSION OF THE STEP-BY-STEP NEGOTIATIONS, EGYPT HAD TO CALL ON THE TWO CO-CHAIRMEN (THE UNITED STATES AND THE USSR) TO RECONVENE THE GENEVA CONFERENCE. THE EGYPTIANS ALSO ASKED FOR THE CONFERENCE TO BE WIDENED TO INCLUDE LEBANON, FRANCE, THE UNITED KINGDOM AND TWO NON-ALIGNED COUNTRIES (YUGOSLAVIA AND INDIA).

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28. DURING THE PAST SIX MONTHS, SOVIET-EGYPTIAN RELATIONS HAVE REMAINED COOL. THE SOVIETS HAVE MADE NO BONES ABOUT THEIR DISAPPROVAL OF EGYPTIAN POLICY. SOVIET UNWILLINGNESS TO REPLACE EGYPTIAN ARMAMENT LOSSES RESULTING FROM THE OCTOBER WAR AND TO RESCHEDULE THE EGYPTIAN DEBT PLAINLY SIGNIFIED MOSCOW'S DISPLEASURE. TO THIS MUST BE ADDED THE PRIVILEGED TREATMENT OPENLY ACCORDED TO SYRIA WHICH, MORE SUBTLY PERHAPS, WAS AN IMPLIED CRITICISM OF EGYPT.

29. THERE HAS BEEN EVERY SIGN THAT THE USSR WANTED TO AVOID A HEAD-ON CLASH WITH EGYPT, BUT CHOSE TO EXERT PRESSURE ON HER, OR EVEN TO CIRCUMVENT HER BY SUPPORTING THE GROUP OF RADICAL ARAB COUNTRIES (LIBYA, IRAQ, SYRIA) AND THE PALESTINIANS. THE LATTER HAVE BEEN DISCREETLY ENCOURAGED TO COLD-SHOULDER CAIRO. IT IS INDEED A FACT THAT THE ARAB COUNTRIES ON THE BEST TERMS WITH MOSCOW ARE ALSO THOSE WHOSE RELATIONS WITH EGYPT HAVE DETERIORATED OR ARE AT LEAST LACKING IN WARMTH. IT HAS ALWAYS BEEN KNOWN THAT THESE COUNTRIES, LIKE THE PLO, WERE OPPOSED TO THE "STEP-BY-STEP POLICY". THE SOVIET UNION UNDOUBTEDLY INTENDED TO KEEP SADAT ON A SHORT LEASH, FOR EXAMPLE BY RESUMING ARMS DELIVERIES ON A CAREFULLY LIMITED SCALE. MOREOVER, EVEN IF DADAT HAS ACTED ON HIS DECISION TO IDVERSITY HIS ARMS PURCHASES, INCLUDING FROM WESTERN SOURCES (WHILE OBTAINING DELIEVERIES THROUGH FAISAL AND BOUMEDIENNE), HE HAS PUBLICLY ADMITTED THAT HE COULD NOT ENTIRELY FOREGO SOVIET

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ARMAMENTS SINCE, IN HIS OWN WORDS, NO OTHER POWER IS ABLE TO REPLACE THE USSR IN THIS SPHERE. THIS STATEMENT OBVIOUSLY RESTRICTED HIS FREEDOM OF ACTION, AS WAS POINTED OUT IN THE PREVIOUS REPORT.

30. SOME PROGRESS APPARENTLY WAS MADE IN IMPROVING RELATIONS BETWEEN MOSCOW AND CAIRO AS A RESULT OF EGYPTIAN FOREIGN MINISTER FAHMI'S VISIT TO MOSCOW ON 19TH APRIL, ALTHOUGH PUBLIC COMMENTS SUGGEST THA DIFFERENCES REMAIN. THE FACT THAT MR. BREZHNEV APPARENTLY REASSURED THE EGYPTIAN FOREIGN MINISTER THAT HE WILL VISIT CAIRO IS REVEALING IN LIGHT OF THE NEW SITUATION THAT HAS NOW DEVELOPED. AS NO FUNDAMENTAL IMPROVEMENT IN SOVIET-EGYPTIAN RELATIONS CAN BE EXPECTED BEFORE THIS VISIT, IT THEREFORE ASSUMES PARTICULAR IMPORTANCE.

31. AS REGARDS RELTIONS BETWEEN THE USSR AND THE PLO, THE MORE PRONOUNCED, THOUGH STILL CAUTIOUS, SUPPORT MOSCOW IS GIVING THIS ORGANIZATION IS A FEATURE OF THE USSR'S POLICY AIMED AT REGAINING A ROLE IN THE ARAB-ISRAELI PEACE NEGOTIATIONS. THE KREMLIN FEELS THAT THIS STANCE WILL ENABLE IT TO EXERCISE ADDITIONAL PRESSURE ON EGYPT AND, TO A LESSER DEGREE, ON THE CONSERVATIVE ARAB KINGDOMS. THE SOVIETS ALSO FEEL THAT THEY STAND TO GAIN IN OTHER WAYS, E.G. BY SCORING POINTS IN THE THIRD WORLD.
SECRET

B. MILITARY

32. THE SOVMEDRON IS CURRENTLY AT ITS NORMAL LEVEL OF 15 SURFACE COMBATANTS. THE SOVIETS KEEP A PART OF THEIR BLACK SEA FLEET IN OPERATIONAL READINESS FOR POSSIBLE REINFORCEMENT OF THE SOVMEDRON. THIS PART OVERAGES 18 SURFACE COMBATANTS, INCLUDING 3 CRUISERS. THE HIGH LEVEL OF DECLARATIONS, MOST OF WHICH

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HAVE NOT BEEN HONOURED BY THE SOVIETS, FOR WARSHIPS SOUTHBOUND TRANSITS OF THE TURKISH STRAITS, PROVIDE THE SOVIETS WITH THE OPTION OF REINFORCING THEIR MEDETERRANEAN SQUADRON ON AN ACCELERATED BASIS UP TO THE LIMIT OF AVAILABLE WARSHIPS IN THE BLACK SEA. USING THIS PRESENT HIGH LEVEL OF DECLARATIONS, UNDER THE MONTREUX CONVENTION IT IS POSSIBLE FOR THEM TO PASS THIS ADDITIONAL FORCE THROUGH THE STRAITS WITHIN NINE DAYS. IT IS RECALLED THAT THE SUBMARINE COMPONENT OF THE SOVMEDRON IS DEPLOYED FROM THE NORTHERN FLEET.

33. IF REPAIR OPERATIONS TO SOVIET NAVAL SHIPS (F-CLASS DIESEL SUBMARIN AND SUBMARINE TENDER) NOW UNDERWAY IN THE YUGOSLAV SHIPYARD OF TIVAT PROVE SATISFACTORY, THE USSR MAY IN THE FUTURE MAKE GREATER USE OF THESE FACILITIES THUS ENHANCING THEIR NAVAL CAPABILITIES IN THE MEDITERRANEAN. THE CHOICE OF AN F-CLASS DIESEL SUBMARINES IS CHARACTERISTIC SINCE AN AVERAGE OF TEN TO TWELVE SUBMARINES OF THAT CLASS ARE BEIN EMPLOYED BY THE SOVMEDRON. THE USE OF THESE FACILITIES COULD THUS LENGTHEN DEPLOYMENT PERIODS FOR THOSE SUBMARINES, I.E. REDUCE THE NEED FOR FREQUENT AND EXPENSIVE ROTATION TO AND FROM THEIR NORTHERN FLEET HOME BASES.

34. THE REOPENING OF THE CANAL WOULD ENABLE THE USSR TO DISTRIBUTE ITS FORCES MORE EASILY BETWEEN ITS MEDITERRANEAN AND ITS INDIAN OCEAN SQUADRONS, AND MORE GENERALLY WOULD GIVE THE USSR ADDED NAVAL AND POLITICAL FLEXIBILITY PARTICULARLY IN TIME OF TENSION.

C. ECONOMIC

35. THERE WAS NO NOTABLE GROWTH IN THE ECONOMIC AND COMMERCIAL EXCHANGES BETWEEN THE COMMUNIST COUNTRIES, PARTICULARLY THE USSR, AND THE COUNTRIES OF THIS AREA DURING TH PERIOD UNDER

SECRET

REVIEW. HOWEVER, THE PART PLAYED BY THE SOVIET UNION IN EGYPT AND IN THE ARAB COUNTRIES OF THE MIDDLE EAST IS STILL SUBJECT TO THE HAZARDS AND THE POLITICAL FLUCTUATIONS GENERATED BY THE ARAB-ISRAELI CONFLICT.

III. CONCLUSIONS

36. IN ITS RELATIONS WITH THE ARAB COUNTRIES THE USSR IS TRYING TO RETAIN AND, IF POSSIBLE, EXTEND ITS POSITIONS IN THE AREA. THE FLUIDITY OF INTER-ARAB RELATIONS PRESENTS PROBLEMS FOR THIS SOVIET POLICY. AT THE POLITICAL LEVEL, NEW UNCERTAINTIES HAVE EMERGED FOLLOWING THE SUSPENSION OF THE TALKS AIMED AT BRINGING ABOUT A SECOND EGYPTIAN-ISRAELI DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT. IN VIEW OF THE RESULTANT DANGERS, EFFORTS AIMED AT ESTABLISHING A JUST AND DURABLE PEACE IN THE REGION SHOULD BE MADE. AT THE MILITARY LEVEL, THE ALLIED COUNTRIES MUST MAINTAIN ADEQUATE STRENGTH TO PRESERVE THE

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NECESSARY BALANCE OF FORCES. AT THE ECONOMIC LEVEL, THE ALLIED COUNTRIES MUST SEEK TO PROMOTE CONSTRUCTIVE CO-OPERATION WITH THE COUNTRIES OF THE AREA.

(ANNEX A- GRAPH - NOT SENT)

ANNEX B TO
C-M(75)27

SOVIET MEDITERRANEAN SQUADRON (SOVMEDRON)
COMPOSITION

SECRET

PAGE 01 NATO 02471 06 OF 06 022245Z

70
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 NEA-09 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02

INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 ACDA-05 TRSE-00 SAJ-01 AF-06 AID-05 EB-07

OMB-01 SCCT-01 MC-02 FEA-01 SAM-01 /096 W
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FM USMISSION NATO
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S E C R E T SECTION 6 OF 6 USNATO 2471

1. THE NUMBER OF SHIPS DEPLOYED TO THE MEDITERRANEAN VARIES BETWEEN 50 AND 60, WHICH REPRESENT JUST OVER 40 PCT OF ALL SOVIET NAVAL FORCES AT SEA. THERE ARE VARIATIONS IN THIS NUMERICAL STRENGTH WHEN THE SQUADRON IS REINFORCED IN TIME OF TENSION SUCH AS THE MIDDLE EAST WAR OR OTHERWISE FOR EXERCISE PURPOSES. OTHER VARIATIONS OCCUR WHEN THE SUBMARINE FORCE IS RELIEVED OR WHEN OTHER SOVIET VESSELS TRANSIT THROUGH THE MEDITERRANEAN.

2. IN GENERAL ABOUT 45 PCT (OR 23-26 SHIPS) OF THE TOTAL IS MADE UP OF VARIOUS AUXILIARY SHIPS PROVIDING LOGISTIC SUPPORT, AND SHIPS ON INTELLIGENCE GATHERING OR SURVEY MISSION. ANOTHER 25 PCT CAN BE ACCOUNTED FOR BY THE STANDING SUBMARINE FORCE WITH 15 SHIPS NORMALLY DEPLOYED WHICH USUALLY CONTAINS ABOUT 12 FOXTROT CLASS DIESEL BOATS AND 1-3 C/J CLASS SSM-EQUIPPED SUBMARINES AND OCCASIONALLY 1 OR 2 NUCLEAR ATTACK SUBMARINES. THE REMAINING 30 PCT (OR 15-18) OF THE SQUADRON COMPRISES THE SURFACE COMBATANTS AS WELL AS 2 AMPHIBIOUS SHIPS AND 2 MINE-SWEEPERS. THUS THE ACTUAL NUMBER OF TRULY OFFENSIVE SURFACE COMBATANTS IS ABOUT 15 SHIPS COVERING THE WHOLE AREA. THE OFFENSIVE ELEMENT SUUALLY CONSISTS OF ONE OR TWO CRUISERS OF

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THE SVERDLOV, KARA OR KYNDA CLASSES, THE LATTER TWO BEING
EQUIPPED WITH SURFACE-TO-SURFACE MISSILES, 7-9 DESTROYERS OF
WHICH NORMALLY ONE OR TWO ARE SSM-EQUIPPED AND OTHER ARE
SECRET

SAM-EQUIPPED, AND SMALLER VESSELS ALSO EQUIPPED WITH MISSILES.
ONLY ON VERY RARE OCCASIONS DO THE SOVIETS NOT HAVE ONE OR
MORE SSM-EQUIPPED SURFACE SHIPS IN THE SQUADRON. THUS, THE
SIGNIFICANT FEATURE OF THE SOVMEDRON IS THE NUMBER OF
SSM-EQUIPPED SHIPS AND THEIR DEPLOYMENT, THE REMAINDER OF THE
SURFACE FORCE APPEARING AS AVAILABLE TO PROVIDE ASW AND SAM
PROTECTION TO THE SSM SHIPS. IN GENERAL, IT IS FAIR TO SAY
THAT THE FORCE IS WELL-BALANCED FOR ITS TASKS.

3. A RATIO OF 1:1 OF AUXILIARIES TO FIGHTING SHIPS SEEMS
HIGH BUT OBSERVING THAT THE SOVIETS HAVE ONLY LIMITED BASE
FACILITIES READILY AVAILABLE, AND SINCE THESE ARE CONCENTRATED
IN EGYPT AND SYRIA, IT IS NOT UNREASONABLE. THEY HAVE SOME
NEW REFITTING POSSIBILITIES IN YUGOSLAVIA; THESE ARE UNDERGOING
INITIAL EVALUATION BY THE SOVIETS AT PRESENT (1).

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(1) THEY ARE DISCUSSED IN THE BODY OF THE REPORT,
PARAGRAPHS 21 AND 22

FACTORS AFFECTING ITS SIZE

4. THE SURFACE SHIPS AND AUXILIARIES OF THE SQUADRON
ARE MAINLY DEPLOYED FROM THE BLACK SEA ALTHOUGH SOME DO COME
FROM THE NORTHERN AND BALTIC FLEETS. THE SUBMARINES ARE ALL
DEPLOYED ON A SIX-MONTHLY ROTATIONAL BASIS FROM THE NORTHERN
FLEET. THIS IS BECAUSE UNDER THE MONTREUX-CONVENTION THEY ARE
ONLY PERMITTED TO DEPLOY SUBMARINES FROM THE BLACK SEA FOR
REPAIRS IN OTHER FLEET AREAS AND NOT FOR OPERATIONS IN THE
MEDITERRANEAN. THE SIZE OF THE SUBMARINE FORCE IS PRESUMABLY
DESIGNED TO PROVIDE ABOUT 10 SHIPS ON PATROL AT ANY ONE TIME.

5. IT SEEMS THAT ONE OF THE MAIN FACTORS WHICH DICTATE
THE RATIONALE FOR THE SIZE OF THE SQUADRON IS THE RESTRICTIONS
IMPOSED BY THE MONTREAX CONVENTION. THESE LIMIT TO NINE
(INCLUDING AUXILIARIES) THE NUMBER WHICH THEY CAN PASS THROUGH
THE TURKISH STRAITS ON ANY SINGLE DAY. THE AGGREGATE TONNAGE
ALLOWED FOR ANY ONE TRANSIT MAY NOT EXCEED 15,000 TONS, BUT IF
A SINGLE SHIP OF GREATER TONNAGE IS DECLARED, SHE MAY BE
ESCORTED BY UP TO TWO DESTROYERS. IT ALSO REQUIRES THE SOVIETS
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TO DECLARE SHIPS 8 DAYS IN ADVANCE TO THE TURKISH AUTHORITIES
AND SHIPS MUST TAKE THEIR DECLARED PASSAGE WITHIN A PERIOD OF

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5 DAYS FROM THE DATE IN THE DECLARATION. IN ORDER TO OVERCOME
THIS TIME DELAY IN REINFORCEMENT POSSIBILITIES OF THE SQUADRON,
AND PRESUMABLY TO MEET UNFORESEEN CONTINGENCIES, THE SOVIETS
ALWAYS HAVE A NUMBER OF SHIPS DECLARED, WHICH IN THE EVENT, DO
NOT HONOUR THEIR DECLARATION. THIS DEALY WAS PARTICULARLY
NOTICEABLE AT THE TIME OF THE OCTOBER WAR WHEN THE SQUADRON
DID NOT REACH ITS PEAK UNTIL AFTER THE CEASEFIRE HAD GONE INTO
EFFECT. THERE MAY HAVE BEEN OTHER CAUSES, BUT THEIR STRICT
ADHERENCE TO THE TERMS OF THE CONVENTION PLAYED ITS PART.

LIMITATIONS ON SOVIET NAVAL OPERATIONS

6. THE SOVMEDRON IS LIMITED IN ITS OPERATIONS BY THE LACK
OF AIR RECONNAISSANCE. WITH THEIR EXPULSION FROM EGYPT IN
JULY 1972, THE SOVIETS LOST THE AIRBASE FROM WHICH THEY HAD
CONDUCTED AIR RECONNAISSANCE MISSIONS OVER THE MEDITERRANEAN
WITH BADGER AIRCRAFT. THEIR TACTIC OF MAINTAINING CONSTANT
SHIP SURVEILLANCE ON THE US CARRIERS, PRE-DATES THIS TIME,
BUT THE LOSS OF AIR RECONNAISSANCE MADE IT NECESSARY TO KEEP
AN EVEN CLOSER WATCH. THE SOVIET MIG-23 AND MIG-25 AIRCRAFT
ARE NOT SUITABLE FOR A MARITIME RECONNAISSANCE ROLE. TO AN
INCREASING DEGREE SOVMEDRON REQUIREMENTS FOR OCEAN RECONNAISSANCE
COULD BE MET THROUGH EMPLOYMENT OF RADAR AND ELINT SATELLITES.

7. THE SQUADRON ALSO LACKS FIGHTER COVER SUPPORT, AND
THIS LEADS THEM TO MAINTAIN A HIGH PERCENTAGE OF SAM-EQUIPPED
SHIPS DEPLOYED. IT IS REASONABLE TO ASSUME THAT THEY PLAN TO
PROVIDE AIR SUPPORT TO THE SQUADRON BY DEPLOYING THEIR OWN
AIRCRAFT CARRIERS KIEV AND MINSK WHEN THEY BECOME OPERATIONAL.
AT THAT TIME WE MUST EXPECT AN OVERALL INCREASE IN THE NUMBER
OF SHIPS DEPLOYED SINCE THE SOVIETS ARE UNLIKELY TO RISK THESE
SHIPS OPERATING WITHOUT AN ASW/AA DEFENSIVE SCREEN. FURTHERMORE,
AN INCREASE IN ESCORTS AND THE CARRIER WILL PROBABLY LEAD TO

AN INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF AUXILIARIES DEPLOYED.

END TEXT
STREATOR

SECRET

<< END OF DOCUMENT >>

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 18 AUG 1999
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 02 MAY 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: CunninFX
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975NATO02471
Document Source: ADS
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: 11652 GDS
Errors: n/a
Film Number: n/a
From: NATO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750599/abbrzjtm.tel
Line Count: 743
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: n/a
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 14
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: A) USNATO 1768; B) STATE 090571
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CunninFX
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 10 APR 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <10 APR 2003 by IzenbeI0>; APPROVED <23 SEP 2003 by CunninFX>
Review Markings:

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Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: REPORT ON THE SITUATION IN THE MEDITERREANEAN (MED REPORT)
TAGS: PFOR, MILI, NATO, UR, XF, XG
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006